



## FIRST THINGS FIRST

*The right system for bright futures*

**WHEREAS**, the Early Childhood Development and Health Board was established by voters in 2006 to ensure that ALL Arizona children five and younger have the tools they need to enter kindergarten healthy and ready to succeed; and,

**WHEREAS**, the current economic crisis – and subsequent budget cuts by the Arizona Legislature – are having a devastating effect on young children and their families; and,

**WHEREAS**, First Things First repeatedly offered an interest-free loan of \$300 million to the Legislature to mitigate the devastating effects of the budget crisis on Arizona's youngest children; and,

**WHEREAS** First Things First further offered to discuss funding the state match to KidsCare on a temporary basis to restore health coverage to thousands of Arizona children and eliminate a waiting list of new children needing health care services; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Arizona Legislature ignored First Things First's attempts to assist with the state budget crisis while ensuring long-term investment in early childhood; and,

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to article IV, part 1, section 1, Constitution of Arizona, the forty-ninth Legislature, 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session, instead presented House Concurrent Resolution 2001 to the Secretary of State for submission to the voters at the next general election to **eliminate First Things First and its programs**; and,

**WHEREAS**, the same ballot measure **sweeps all current and future tobacco revenue** set aside for early childhood services and **deposits it in to the state General Fund for use at the state Legislature's discretion forever**.

**NOW THEREFORE** be it resolved that the Early Childhood Development and Health Board (First Things First Board) opposes the ballot measure House Concurrent Resolution 2001 from the 7<sup>th</sup> Special Session of the 49<sup>th</sup> Legislature; and urges every citizen in our state to do their utmost to preserve early childhood services in Arizona , including:

- Informing and educating voters on the devastating effects of the HCR 2001 ballot measure to the education and health of Arizona's youngest children;
- Becoming involved in formal efforts to defeat the HCR 2001 ballot measure; and,
- Voting NO on the HCR 2001 ballot measure in November.